

'He supposed that his brothers would understand...' (c. 1486)

Exodus 2:11–20

Moses Murders an Egyptian

11 And then in those days when Moses had grown up, he went out to his brothers, and he saw their forced labor, and he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, *one of his brothers*.

12 And he turned here and there, and he saw no one, and he struck the Egyptian, and he hid him in the sand.

13 And he went out on the second day, and there were two Hebrew men fighting, and he said to the guilty *one*, "Why do you strike your neighbor?"

14a And he said, "Who appointed you as a commander and a judge over us? *Are you intending to kill me like you killed the Egyptian?*" [cf. [Acts 7:22–28](#); [Heb 11:24–26](#)]

Moses Flees to Midian

14b And Moses was afraid, and he said, "Surely the matter has become known." [cf. [Acts 7:29](#)]

15 And Pharaoh heard this matter, and he sought to kill Moses, and Moses fled from Pharaoh, and he lived in the land of Midian, and he lived at a certain well.

16 *Now* the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

17 And the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and came to their rescue and watered their flock.

18 And they came to Reuel, their father, and he said, "Why have you come so quickly today?"

19 And they said, "An Egyptian man delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and he even drew *water* for us and watered the flock."

20 And he said to his daughters, "Where *is* he? Why then have you left the man? Call him so that he can eat some food."

A God Who Sees, Hears and Remembers (c. 1486 – 1447 BC)

Exodus 2:21–25

Moses' Family

21 And Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave Zipporah his daughter to Moses.

22 And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom because he said, "I am an alien in a foreign land."

The Death of Thutmose III (c. 1450 BC)

23 And then during those many days, the king of Egypt died, and the Israelites groaned because of the work, and they cried out, and their cry for help because of the work went up to God.

24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob,

25 and God saw the Israelites, and God took notice.

Encounter at Mount Sinai (1447 BC)

Exodus 3:1–4:17

The Burning Bush

3:1 And Moses was a shepherd with the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the west of the desert, and he came to the mountain of God, to Horeb.

2 And the angel of Yahweh appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush, and he looked, and there was the bush burning with fire, but the bush was not being consumed.

3 And Moses said, "Let me turn aside and see this great sight. Why does the bush not burn up?"

4 And Yahweh saw that he turned aside to see, and God called to him from the midst of the bush, and he said, "Moses, Moses." And he said, "Here I *am*."

5 And he said, "You must not come near to here. Take off your sandals from on your feet, because the place on which you *are* standing, it *is* holy ground."

6 And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." [[Matt 22:31–33](#)] And Moses hid his face because he was afraid of looking at God.

7 And Yahweh said, "Surely I have seen the misery of my people who *are* in Egypt, and I have heard their cry of distress because of their oppressors, for I know their sufferings.

8 And I have come down to deliver them from the hand of *the* Egyptians and to bring them up from this land to a good and wide land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

9 And now, look, the cry of distress of the Israelites has come to me, and also I see the oppression *with* which *the* Egyptians *are* oppressing them.

10 And now come, and I will send you to Pharaoh, and *you must* bring my people, the Israelites, out from Egypt.” [cf. [Acts 7:30–35](#)]

“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?”

11 But Moses said to God, “Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out from Egypt?”

12 And he said, “Because I am with you, and this *will be* the sign for you that I myself have sent you: When you bring the people out from Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain.”

“Who should I say sent me?”

13 But Moses said to God, “Look, *if* I go to the Israelites and I say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What *is* his name?’ *then* what shall I say to them?”

14 And God said to Moses, “I am that I am.” And he said, “So you must say to the Israelites, ‘I am sent me to you.’”

15 And God said again to Moses, “So you must say to the Israelites, ‘Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* my name forever, and this *is* my remembrance from generation to generation.’

16 Go and gather the elders of Israel and say to them, ‘Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, appeared to me, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘I have carefully attended to you and what has been done to you in Egypt.’

17 And I said, ‘I will bring you up from the misery of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.’”

18 And they will listen to your voice, and you will go, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you will say to him, ‘Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews has met with us, and now let us please go *on* a journey of three days into the desert, and let us sacrifice to Yahweh our God.’

19 But I myself know that the king of Egypt will not allow you to go unless compelled by a strong hand.

20 And I will stretch out my hand, and I will strike Egypt with all of my wonders that I will do in its midst, and afterward he will release you.

21 And I will give this people favor in the eyes of *the* Egyptians, and then when you go, you will not go empty-handed.

22 And a woman will ask from her neighbor and from the woman dwelling as an alien in her house *for* objects of silver and objects of gold and garments, and you will put *them* on your sons and on your daughters; and you will plunder Egypt.”

“But they will not believe me”

4:1 And Moses answered, and he said, “And if they do not believe me and they do not listen to my voice, but they say, ‘Yahweh did not appear to you?’”

2 And Yahweh said to him, “What *is* this in your hand?” And he said, “A staff.”

3 And he said, “Throw it onto the ground.” And he threw it onto the ground, and it became a snake, and Moses fled from it.

4 And Yahweh said to Moses, “Reach out your hand and grasp *it* by its tail” — (And he reached out his hand and grabbed it, and it became a staff in his palm.)—

5 “so that they may believe that Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, appeared to you, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

6 And Yahweh said to him again, “Put your hand into the fold of your garment.” And he put his hand into the fold of his garment, and he took it out, and, to his surprise, his hand *was* afflicted with a skin disease, like snow.

7 And he said, “Return your hand to the fold of your garment.” And he returned his hand to the fold of his garment, and he took it out from the fold of his garment, and, to his surprise, it was restored like the rest of his body.

8 “And if they do not believe you and they will not listen to the voice of the former sign, *then* they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

9 And if they also do not believe the second of these signs and they will not listen to your voice, *then* you must take water from the Nile and pour *it* onto the dry ground, and the water that you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.”

“But I am not eloquent”

10 And Moses said to Yahweh, “Please, Lord, I *am* not a man of words, neither recently nor in the past nor since your speaking to your servant, because I *am* heavy of mouth and of tongue.”

11 And Yahweh said to him, “Who gave a mouth to humankind, or who makes mute or deaf or sighted or blind? *Is it* not I, Yahweh?”

12 So then go, and I myself will be with your mouth, and I will teach you what you must speak.”

“Please send someone else!”

13 And he said, “Please, Lord, do send anyone else whom you wish to send.”

14 And Yahweh was angry with Moses and said, “*Is there* not Aaron your brother the Levite? I know that he certainly can speak, and also there he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will rejoice in his heart.

15 And you will speak to him, and you will put words in his mouth, and I myself will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you must do.

16 And he will speak for you to the people, and then he will be to you as a mouth, and you will be to him as a god.
 17 And you must take this staff in your hand, with which you will do the signs.”

The Journey Back to Egypt (late 1447 BC)

Exodus 4:18–31

Moses Says Goodbye to Jethro

18 And Moses went, and he returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and he said to him, “Please let me go, and let me return to my brothers who *are* in Egypt, and let me see whether they *are* yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, “Go in peace.”

Yahweh’s Final Instructions (Moses delayed his departure?)

19 And Yahweh said to Moses in Midian, “Go, return to Egypt because all the men have died who *were* seeking your life.”

20 And Moses took his wife and his sons and had them ride on the donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt, and Moses took the staff of God in his hand.

21 And Yahweh said to Moses, “When you go to return to Egypt, see all of the wonders that I have put in your hand, and do them before Pharaoh, and I myself will harden his heart, and he will not release the people.

22 And you must say to Pharaoh, “Thus says Yahweh, “Israel *is* my son, my firstborn.”

23 And I said to you, “Release my son and let him serve me,” but you refused to release him. Look, I *am about* to kill your son, your firstborn.”

Zipporah Circumcises Her Son (Moses refused or was unable to do it himself?)

24 And on the way, at the place of overnight lodging, Yahweh encountered him and sought to kill him.

25 But Zipporah took a flint *knife*, and she cut off the foreskin of her son, and she touched his feet, and she said, “Yes, you *are* a bridegroom of blood to me.”

26 And he left him alone. At that time she said, “A bridegroom of blood,” because of the circumcision.

Aaron Meets Moses at Mount Sinai

27 And Yahweh said to Aaron, “Go to the desert to meet Moses.” And he went and encountered him at the mountain of God and kissed him.

28 And Moses told Aaron all the words of Yahweh, who had sent him—and all the signs that he had commanded him.

The Israelites Believe Moses and Aaron

29 And Moses and Aaron went, and they gathered all of the elders of the Israelites.

30 And Aaron spoke all the words that Yahweh had spoken to Moses, and he did the signs before the eyes of the people.

31 And the people believed when they heard that Yahweh had attended to the Israelites and that he had seen their misery, and they knelt down and they worshiped.

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Chronological Notes

1) The Pharaoh Who Sought to Kill Moses.¹

- A) Thutmose III was a minor when he came to power in 1504, and thus was younger than Moses. If, indeed, Moses had been reared as the foster son of Hatshepsut, there is every likelihood that he posed a real threat to the younger Thutmose, since Hatshepsut had no natural sons. That is, Moses may have been a candidate for pharaoh, with only his Semitic origins standing in the way. In any case, there appears to have been genuine animosity between Moses and the pharaoh. This is evident in the fact that Moses, having slain an Egyptian, was forced to flee Egypt for his life. That the pharaoh himself took note of what would otherwise have been a relatively minor issue suggests that this particular pharaoh had more than casual interest in ridding himself of Moses. Moses’s self-imposed exile took place in 1486, when he was forty years old (Acts 7:23). Thutmose III had been in power for eighteen years, and the aged Hatshepsut, who died three years later, was likely no longer able to interdict the will of her son-in-law/nephew.

¹ Sourced from Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 75–78.

- B) For forty long years Moses remained a fugitive from Egypt, having found a home among the Midianites of the Sinai and Arabia. One of the reasons for such a long exile was the fact that the pharaoh from whom Moses fled continued to live and reign—it was only after his death that Moses felt free to return to Egypt (Exod 2:23; 4:19). Thutmose III died in 1450 and was succeeded by his son Amenhotep II (1450–1425).
- (1) It is important to note that the biblical narrative requires a rule of almost forty years for the pharaoh who sought Moses's life, since the king who died at the end of Moses's sojourn in Midian was clearly the same one who had threatened him nearly forty years earlier. Of all the rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty, only Thutmose III reigned long enough to qualify.